

Officials Fear C.I.A. Work Was Hurt by Disclosures

Officials active in United States intelligence operations have expressed the fear that some of their most effective weapons have been blunted by disclosures of the secret financial support provided by the Central Intelligence Agency to other groups.

These officials, in this country and abroad, argued in defense of the controversial C.I.A. programs, saying the funds involved amounted to "only a fraction" of investments by Communist nations in covert attempts to penetrate Western and neutralist governments.

An intricate web of undercover political activities and propaganda by American intelligence has been exposed to public view since disclosure last month of the agency's financial support for the National Student Association.

Can't Respond Publicly

While the American intelligence community has been unable to respond publicly to the resulting criticism, New York Times correspondents in various capitals interviewed United States officials and other qualified people who are not normally available to be questioned. The following main points emerged:

¶ A struggle through subversion and influence-seeking continues unabated—particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America—although East-West tensions on the high political level have diminished and the original cold war battleground—Europe—has stabilized.

Whether the tactics involve

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The New York Times

U.S. YOUTHS AT WORLD FESTIVAL: American delegates parading at Communist-sponsored World Youth Festival in Vienna in 1959. C.I.A.-supported Americans were in delegation and carried out conspicuous anti-Communist activity that annoyed Russians.

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dollar payments to a South American labor union threatened by Communist take-over or Communist rifles smuggled to rebellious Kurdish tribesmen in cases marked "sewing machines," this is a battle to influence and penetrate foreign countries, the sources said.

¶ United States aid to student and youth groups around the world has been effectively halted by the disclosures. No delegation of non-Communist American youths is expected to attend the next World Youth Festival in Sofia, Bulgaria, next year. At previous festivals, in Vienna and Helsinki, American students, secretly financed by the C.I.A., prevented Communist delegations from speaking unchallenged.

¶ American intelligence officials are dismayed at what they consider unjustified criticism of covert political activities and frustrated over security requirements that prevent them from replying openly. They see a sense of false security in this country — what one official called "a misunderstanding of the arena of conflict."

Hungarian Defector Speaks

One man who could speak out was Laszlo Szabo, a former major in the Hungarian intelligence service who defected to the United States in 1965. He expressed amazement at the "naive attitude of Americans about propaganda." "It is the big front in the secret war," he said.

Some American intelligence officials were willing to be quoted directly on their views and on their information supporting these conclusions, although their names and positions cannot be given.

One of these sources summed up the American intelligence community's feeling about covert political action this way: "If a little money was put into a free labor union or other institution in a precarious country to keep it alive under adverse circumstances, it was worth it."

"The big purpose is, and was, pre-emptive — to prevent the Communists from taking over. In this way we have succeeded in many cases in avoiding confrontations that might have been far more costly and difficult if the Communist-bloc efforts had prevailed."

All the intelligence officers interviewed said they strongly believed that clandestine financial support for certain private organizations should continue, except in fields where the support has been exposed.

This view has run into strong opposition in the United States Government. Vice President Humphrey said the student-financing programs represented "one of the saddest times, in reference to public policy, our Government has had."

Some observers have pointed out that much of the support for international activities could have been given overtly, by Government agencies other than the C.I.A. Suspicion of espionage motivations, these people believe, could thus have been avoided.

Defenders of the C.I.A. view say such opinions reflect a poor grasp of the nature of modern intelligence.

"There are not that many secrets," one American official said. "The major thrust of Soviet officials is not collecting information — though they certainly do that as well—but in exerting influence."

"So we, too, are in the influence business." Recent defectors from Communist intelligence services

have confirmed that the basic motivation of covert Communist activity in the West is not to steal documents but to disseminate propaganda and carry on "relentlessly political" activity.

"You Americans simply do not understand that," said Wladyslaw Tykocinski, former chief of the Polish military mission in West Berlin. Mr. Tykocinski, 43 years old, was interviewed in Washington, where he now lives after defecting in May, 1965. He said he was "angry" that the covert subsidy programs were "so stupidly managed."

"In the East we have no such problems," he said. "The orders are given in Moscow and the money is there. Moscow says, 'Pay for this', and it is paid."

He discussed the strategy of Communist intelligence services in the West.

"It is not the recruiting of spies—that is quite easy," he said. "The whole thing is political—everything should show that world opinion is supporting Communism."

"You are always looking here at home for Communists. But they—the real Communists of the intelligence apparatus—don't want Communists. They

want citizens with money and influence. They want aristocrats and opinion-makers.

"They flatter the intellectuals and the non-Communist left and they get them to do the work. They don't want them as Communist party members but as stooges who have entree in society."

"To prove to the world that you are saving the world and that you are the wave of the future, you need respectable people—not workers, but students, churchmen, professors and doctors."

The Battle for Influence

This is the battle for influence that the intelligence officers say the general public does not understand.

Officials point to world press reaction as an indication of the crippling of United States covert political activities.

The Cairo newspaper Al Ahram said: "It is the right of people of liberated countries to be more vigilant in dealing with the organizations and groupings whose connections with the C.I.A. have been revealed."

Radio listeners in Rumania heard Government reports that "a number of young people, both from the United States and other countries, came under po-

lice attention for their progressive and democratic opinions or activities."

A Havana radio station commented that the C.I.A. money "is nothing less than a bribe, a bribe to a small minority of student and youth leaders at the top who are prepared to betray the interests of the members that they are supposed to represent."

An American intelligence official said: "We are, in effect, disarmed in this area. Now the question is whether the international youth movement is going to be taken over completely by the Communists without a fight."

Western intelligence services estimate that the Communist bloc has spent \$10-million annually since the end of World War II to maintain Communist-dominated international youth organizations.

This figure includes parts of the costs of the eight World Youth Festivals held since the nineteen-forties. The festival in Helsinki in 1962 was estimated to have cost \$25-million to \$30-million. The 1957 festival, held in Moscow, cost well over \$50-million, according to the Western estimates.

'Tried to Sow Doubts'

The Central Intelligence Agency's financial support to the National Student Association, which sent delegates to several of these festivals, totaled \$3-million over 15 years, according to published statements.

At the festivals in Helsinki and in Vienna, in 1959, there was conspicuous anti-Communist activity by the Americans, and Soviet spokesmen still voice their annoyance.

Sergei P. Pavlov, head of Komsomol—the young Communist League—wrote in November that Americans in Hel-

sinki tried to "sow doubts, blacken the Soviet Union's history and discredit Marxism-Leninism."

Besides the festivals, Communist youth organizations sponsor summer camps to which young people from many countries can go cheaply and receive training and indoctrination in Communism.

For students from developing countries, Patrice Lumumba Friendship University in Moscow offers the promise of cheap, even free, university education. Lumumba University graduated its first four-year class last June.

According to Western intelligence sources, the university is operated directly by senior staff officers of the main Soviet intelligence organization. Western sources identified a former rector of the university, Pavel D. Yerzin, as a general on the intelligence agency staff.

Graduates in Governments

Former students at Lumumba University are now to be found in Government positions in several African countries, and Western intelligence officers believe them to be in active collaboration with their mentors in Moscow.

Further description of the Communist bloc's activity with students in the West came from Mr. Szabo, who was interviewed in the United States. He had been chief of the British section of the Hungarian intelligence service.

He said he had sent a Hungarian professor to study at the University of London. The professor was told not to waste time with Communists or with the far left, he said, but to get to know influential people who might be sympathetic and helpful later. Mr. Szabo said that the target of first importance was students who might later

work for the British Foreign Office.

According to Mr. Szabo, the Hungarian intelligence system sought every opportunity to plant agents in British universities. In 1964, he said, the British Broadcasting Corporation offered two-week visits to Britain for writers of the best essay on Shakespeare.

"A number of intelligence officers in the universities were ordered to write essays that would win the contest," he said. Apparently the agents were unable to brush up their Shakespeare fast enough, Mr. Szabo went on, for the contest was won by two legitimate students. "We could not recruit and train them in time," Mr. Szabo said.

Covert political activity extends beyond youth movements. C.I.A. financing for labor unions, research organizations and other public institutions has been disclosed.

Here, the American intelligence officials also argued in terms of what the other side was doing.

The Communists smuggle arms, bribe officials and nurture subversive organizations, the officials said, and must be countered by someone.

Activity in Uruguay Charged

Western intelligence sources said that boxes labelled "sewing machines" were unloaded from a Bulgarian freighter in Beirut, Lebanon, in January of 1966. They were found to contain 1,500 rifles and a million rounds of ammunition believed to be consigned to Kurdish rebels in Iraq, the intelligence sources continued.

In Uruguay the Soviet Embassy was said to have pumped nearly a million dollars into the local Communist party's campaign for the national elections in November.

Intelligence sources said the money came from local bank accounts, money deposited by

Uruguayan companies that did business with the Soviet Union. By contract, part of the payment was to be deposited into secret accounts.

The Uruguayan Government charges that Communist diplomatic missions are being used as covers for political operations. The Government has tried to expel the East German trade mission, noting that it has not drummed up any trade in three years.

At a meeting of the Afro-Asian People Solidarity Organization in Nicosia, Cyprus, last month, a Kenya delegation friendly to the Soviet Union was seated in place of the Government delegation. Western intelligence sources said organizing officials of the meeting had received \$28,000 from the Soviet Embassy.

Agents Seen in Embassies

According to official Western estimates, over 40 per cent of Soviet ambassadors now serving in embassies have prior intelligence connections and many of them are known to Western officials as intelligence agents.

In December, 1966, there were 776 Soviet officers serving in various official positions in 29 African countries, Western sources said, and 400 of them were said to have been identified as intelligence officers.

"What we see is a Soviet diplomatic establishment far larger than it needs to be," said one American official. "There are 38 Soviet diplomats in Argentina, for example. Italy, which has much more commerce with Argentina, has 16 diplomats there; West Germany, with even closer trade relations, has only 14 diplomats in Argentina."

"We have to ask ourselves what these Soviets are doing there," this intelligence source said, "and, when we find out, give support to the people they are out to take over."